

# HIS BEATITUDE IN NORTHERN MADAGASCAR

On 27<sup>th</sup> February 2008, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, accompanied by His Grace Ignatios Bishop of Madagascar and the Very Rev. Archimandrite Panteleimon Arathymos, arrived in Matsunga in Northern Madagascar, on the shores of the Indian Ocean .

During the official welcome at the airport, His Beatitude was welcomed by the Governor, the Mayor, the political and military officials, Bishops of other Churches, the clergy and many Orthodox faithful.

A doxology was then sung at the Holy Church of St Nicholas, during which the Venerable Primate of the Alexandrian Throne thanked everyone for the warm welcome and spoke of the first Greek immigrants to Madagascar , who in 1953 built this church in the most central point in the town.

On the afternoon of the same day, His Beatitude met with the Governor and the Mayor, who both expressed their joy and honour at the first visit by a Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Matsunga.

**His Beatitude asked to be informed about the immediate needs of the population,** stressing that the ancient Patriarchate is always there for the this beautiful country, especially for the developing wider areas of the Northern regions and announced the building of a high school, Lyceum and youth centre, reading library and sports centre, to be donated by the Brotherhood of Orthodox External Missions of Thessaloniki.

He then went to the Harbour where he blessed the Greeks ships lying at anchor there and then on to the cemetery where

he sang a memorial service for the Greek immigrants interred there.